

From: Jeffrey Horn
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

United States Justice Department:

As an assistant professor of Computer Science, with a Ph.D. in Computer Science and four years of industry experience as a computer networking consultant, it is my opinion that the currently proposed settlement between Microsoft and the US Justice Department is fundamentally flawed. As a researcher and developer in the field of computers, I have seen first hand, time and again, how Microsoft has used its monopoly status to stifle competition and innovation. It is clear to me that Microsoft, in its corporate philosophy, is not interested in innovating, but rather it seeks power and control (and profit). I won't bother with the details of examples, as they have been well-documented, but I will simply list some examples: the elimination of the browser as an alternative desktop, the attempt to eliminate the platform-independent programming language Java (which supports OS independent processing), the attack on the open-source model of software development, etc.

It is my considered opinion that without Microsoft, or at least without its monopolistic influence, the computer industry, the user-computer interface, and indeed our entire understanding of the how computers can help people, would have progressed much further than we actually have so far.

I strongly recommend a restructuring of the corporation, and not simply punitive measures. Microsoft has demonstrated repeatedly that it cannot change its corporate culture. Instead, the operating system itself must be made open to support of third-party products, to include new paradigms of computation. Microsoft must not be allowed to keep the entire software "pie" to itself, as it cannot be trusted to do anything beneficial with it.

Thank you for your attention.

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